

1981

Notes from NSTA District VIII Director

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Recommended Citation

Fisher, Robert L. (1981) "Notes from NSTA District VIII Director," *Iowa Science Teachers Journal*: Vol. 18 : No. 1 , Article 25.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/istj/vol18/iss1/25>

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NOTES FROM NSTA DISTRICT VIII DIRECTOR

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The NSTA regional conventions in Cleveland and Orlando were a success! Participants included several teachers from District VIII (Illinois, Iowa and Missouri). Remember that the 1981 Convention sites are New York (April 3-6), Denver (November 5-7), Nashville (November 19-21), and Vancouver (December 3-5). Plan now to attend.

Speaking of conventions, all three states in this District can be proud of the professional opportunities provided to science teachers by the state association conventions. The price of *everything* is causing us to carefully consider what we spend for professional growth. The state association probably provides us with the most economical way to continue our own professional growth, so don't miss the next opportunity.

Speaking of growth: Your own profession is having a problem with numbers! We can't do anything to increase the number of clients (students) but you, personally, can do much to increase 1) the actual enrollment in science courses and 2) the quantity and quality of persons who elect teaching of science as a career.

Do you know: Is the percent of students taking science courses in your school a) increasing, b) decreasing or c) remaining the same? Find out! The answer is important to all of us. You are talking about the future of each and every individual in your school. You are also talking about the employment of teachers! Your job? Some teachers have found out the answer to this question — too late — the hard way! Enrollment declines cost them their job.

What can you do personally? A lot. One type of activity is providing "palatable" courses to students of all ages. Science is not difficult! If we can teach science to all students at the seventh grade level, why is it that "science is too difficult" for many students at the high school level?

I would be interested in hearing from those teachers who have increased science enrollment in their school! What have you done to encourage a good student who likes people to consider a career in the teaching of science? Evidently not enough. There is a drastic shortage of science teachers, and it is getting worse, not better. Better science teaching comes about primarily through better-prepared people teaching science. That, it seems to me, is where we need to place our greatest emphasis today!